Mr. Scoones remarks in his brief preface that the quality of English epistolary correspondence is not surpassed by that of any other European nation ; and although some will no doubt be disposed to assert a preemmonce for the French, we are inclined upon the whole to agree with the editor of this rich collection. Nor is the art of letter-writing apparently in its decline. We hear many complaints of the decay of what was once considered among the most elegant of accomplishments, and it is no doubt true that the importance formerly attributed to this species of composition has been diminished by the multiplication of newspapers and books, while, at the same time, a certain copiousness and polish of epistolary style has gone out of fashion along with the formality of manner which prevailed in the last century. But we have only to survey the contents of a volume like this-strangely meagre though it is in contemporary specimens-to be satisfied that few better examples of correspondence have been produced in any age than those which illustrate the literature of our own day. It is remarkable that the service which Mr. Scoones has now done us was not undertaken long ago. In such an anthology, arranged as this is in the order of time, we can not only enjoy the company of wits and scholars, and study the display of character, but we can trace the progress of literary style and the revolutions of society. We get much closer to the famous men and women of past ages in their familiar and confidential communication with friends than it is possible to do in the set addresses which they penned or the press under the consciousness of public observation; and in many cases it is only when their books are read by the light of their letters that we can understand their exact relation to the spirit of their time, etc. It is in the books that we find the best thoughts of the best minds; it is in the letters that we look for traces of the general thought of society, and the manner of speech of cultivated persons. Mr. Scoones has done well to adopt the chronological arrangement instead of attempting a classification by subjects. Any other plan than the one he has chosen would have robbed the letters of half their significance. His editorial labors have not gone far beyond the work of selection. Brief notes prefixed to most of the epistles give some account of the writers and the circumstances under which the letters were penned. Short as these iniroductions are, many of them might be shorter with advantage; and yet there are numerous allusions in the text which ought to be, and are not, explained. For instance, we have a letter of Cowpers, written to the Rev. John Newton shortly after the publication of "The Task," and in it is the following passage, the meaning of which is as doubtful as the syntax; "I know no more than you what kind of market my book has found; but this I believe that had not Henderson died, and had it been worth my while to have given him a hundred pounds to have read it in public, it would have been more popular than it is." The interest of these lines would have been greatly enhanced if Mr. Scoones had explained in a foot-note that the popularity of "John Gilpin" was largely owing to Henderson, the actor, who read it to crowded audiences in London. The point, however, upon which the editor of such a collection must expect to be most severely assailed is the wisdom of his choice Picking out four hundred and fifty letters from the literature of four hundred years, he may be sure to displease crit -, both in what he takes and in what he leaves behind. Purely political letters he has, as a rule, rejected; of purely religious letters the examples are very few; letters unfit for family reading have been rigorously excluded. It cannot be said that the specimens of the best letterwriters are satisfactory; there are letters which have no claim to admission, either because of their origin or because of thir merit; and the letters of "Junius" and "Peter Plimley," which were political tracts written for publication, clearly should have no place in such a collection. The book, upon the whole, is a little disappointing; yet it is so good that we are rather disposed to praise the Industry of the compiler than to find tault with his

In turning over the pages the reader will be struck by the long interval that passed before epistolary correspondence began to be marked by a The Paston Letters, with which Mr. Scoones opens his budget, have a purely historical interest; and for two hundred years the art of epis-tolary correspondence (if we may call it so) seems to be entirely unknown. We do not mean that the value of the letters covered by this period (1450-1650) is wholly antiquarian, but that we read them only for their contents, not at all for any polish of manner. Often, indeed, the cumbersome manner of the age seems to be for a while forgotten, but it is only the momentary manifestation of strong emo tion or a strong character. The beautiful Christian expression to his letter (1529) written to his wife on the destruction of a part of his property at Chelsea-a grace quite foreign to the style of the

Mistress Alyce,—In my most harty will, I recomend me to you. And whereas I am enfourmed by my son Heron of the loss of our parnes, and our neighbours also, with all the corne that was therein, albeit saving God's pleasure it is gret pite of so much good corne lost, yet sith it hath inked hym to send us such a chance, we must not only be content, but also be glad of his visitation. the sent us all that we have lost; and sith he hath by suca a chance taken it away againe, his cleasure be funfilled. Let us never grudge thereat, but take it in good worth, and hartely thank him, as well for adversitie, as for prospertice. And par adventure we have more cause to thank him for

of the literary good fellows; we stroll through the gardens of Hampton Court with beautiful Maids of Honor; we sit with the Scriblerus Club; we are in the thick of the Quarrel of the Dunces; we watch that elegant life of lettered ease which closed Pope's career in the pretty villa on the Thames. The poet well knew what precious memorials he was preparing for posterity, and he was not at all averse to putting them to press while be could enjoy the applause. He schemed, and cheated and told lies for years, that he might print his own letters without being ridiculed for his vanity. He hired scamps to steal them. He instigated rascally booksellers to buy them. He caused "surreptitions" editions to be put forth, only that he might have an excuse to print " genuine" editions as if in self defence. He recalled his letters to Swift, when Swift was in his decay, and, having published them, then accused Swift of a breach of confidence and propriety. He complicated the series of regneries and falsehoods with so many ingenious tricks and forgeries that biographers have been nearly a hun-

swerriety. He complicated the series of romeries and fashends with so many injenious trick and forgeties that biographers have been nearly a hundred and fifty years in straightening out the story, and it is only within a short time that his peridy in the matter of the Swiff leiters has been townght to light. Never perhaps, did a man of genus stono so low and so lone for such a trivial object. Never did a skilful tricketer leaves o many cleens for his other certain the many of the control of a skilful tricketer leaves o many cleens for his other certain to the world. He falsified dates amount of the season the winding changes in the leiters before he gave them to the world. He falsified dates amounted the season which the proposed. The season the winding instance of his lack of hierary consciences in the best of the letters printed by Mr. Secones, I list the one which contains the ecclerated description of the two lowers killed by indiving;

Madam—I have been what I never was till now in diet to von for a letter some weeks. I was he was a swood dangerous tilmee, one from the first, have ingoined to the season of the containing the season of the world of the season of the sea

John was now matering several kinds of poppies and field-flowers to her complexion, to make her a present of knots for the day. While they were thas employed (it was on the last of July), a terrible storm of thunder and lightning arose, that drove the laborers to what shelter the trees or hedges aflorded. Sarah, frighted and out of breath, sinks on a haveock, and John (who never separated from her) sate by her side, having raked two or three heaps together to secure her. Immediately there was heard so loud a crack as if Heaven had burst asunder. The laborers, all solicitous for each other's safety, called to one another; those that were nearest our lovers, hearing no answer, stept to the place where they lay; they first saw a little smoke, and after, this faithful pair.—John, with one arm about his Sarah's neck, and the other held over her face, as if to secure her from the lightning. They were struck dead, and already grown stiff and cold in this tender posture. There was no mark or discoloring on their bodies, only that Sarah's evebrow was a little singed, and a small spot between her breasts. They were buried the next day in one grave, in the parish of Stanton-Harcourt, in Oxfordshre, where my Lord Harcourt, at my request, has created a monument over them. Of the following epitaphs which I made, the critics have chosen the godly one: I like neither, but wish you had been in England to have done this office better: I think 'twas what you could not have refused me on so moving an occasion.

When Eastern lovers feed the fun'ral fire, the third the season in the parish of the fun'ral fire.

When Eastern lovers feed the fun'ral fire, On the same pile their faithful Fair expire; Here pitying Heav'n that virtue mutual found, And blasted both, that it might neither wound, Hearts so sincere, th' Almighty saw well please

Lady Mary's easy and entertaining epistles are chosen, and they suffice, perhaps, to justify their fame. No woman, certainly, has ever surpassed them, and few men have equalled them. This is the oft-praised description of a Turkish interior at

I was invited to dire with the Grand Vizier's lady; and it was with a great deal of pleasure I prepared myself for an entertainment which was never before given to any Christian. I thought I should very little satisfy her curiosity (which I did not doubt was a consideral le motive to the invitation) by going in a dress she was used to see, and therefore dressed myself in the court baoit of

looks a common field, where, under the shade of a haycock, sat two lovers, as constant as ever were found in Romance, beneath a spreading beech. The name of the one (let it sound as it will) was John Hewet; of the other, Sarah Drew, John was a well-set man about five-and-twenty, Sarah a brown woman of eighteen. John had for several months borne the labor of the day in the same field with Sarah; when she milked, it was his m.rning and evening charge to bring the cows to her pail. Their love was the talk, but not the scandal, of the whole neighborhood; for all they aimed at was the blameless possession of each other in marriage. It was but this very morning that he had obtained her parents' consent, and it was but till the next week that they were to wait to be happy. Perhaps this very day, in the intervals of their work, they were talking of their wedding clotnes; and John was now matching several kinds of poppies and field-flowers to her complexion, to make her a present of knots for the day. While they were this sat the Kivaya's, hay, teaming on transies of white satin, embroidered; and at her feet sat two young girls about twelve years old, lovely as angels, dressed perfectiv rich and almost covered with lewels. But they were hardly seen near the fair Fatima (for that is her name), so much her beauty effaced everything I have seen, nay, all that has been called lovely either in England or Germany. I must own that I never saw anything so cloriously beautiful, nor can I recollect a face that would have been taken notice of near hers. She stood up to receive me, saluting me after their fashion, putting her hand to her heart with a sweetness full of majesty, that no court breeding could ever give. She ordered enshions to be given me, and took care to place me in the corner, which is the place of honor. I confess, though the Greek lady had before given me a great epinion [of her beauty, I was so struck with admiration that I could not for some time speak to her, being wholly taken up in gazing. That surprising harmony of features, that charming result of the whole! that exact proportion of body! that lovely blocm of complexion unsullied by art! the unatterable enchantment of her smile—But her eyes!—large and black, with all the soft languishment of the blue! every turn of her sendle—But her eyes!—large and black, with all the soft languishment of the blue! every turn of her face discovering some new grace. After my first surprise was over, I endeavored, by nicely examining her face, to find out some imperfection, without any front of noy search, but my being clearly convinced of the error of that vulgar notion, that a face exactly proportioned, and perfectly beautiful, would not be agreeable, having done for her with more success, what Apelles is said to have essayed by a collection of the most exact features, to form a perfect face.

Add to all this a behavior so full of grace and sweetness, such success, what Apelles is said to have essayed by a collection of the most exact features, to form a perfect face.

the contribute of the contribu

ceding extract. This was originally written to Lady Mary Wortley Montagu; but when it was printed it appeared with a new introduction and other alterations, and was addressed to Sheffield, Duke of Buckingham. The description, moreover, was principally maginary.

We cannot say that the selections from Pope fairly represent the excellence of what must be considered one of the most remarkable series of letters in our language. Only three are given, and only one of the three deserved to be given. Seven of Lady Mary's easy and entertaining epistles are

daughter, the Countess of Bute:

Daughter! daughter! dou't call names; you are always abusing my pleasures, which is what no mortal will bear. Trash, lumber, sad stuft, are the titles you give to my favorite amusement. If I call a white staft a stick of wood, a gold key gilded brass, and the ensigns of ilinistrious orders colored strings, this may be philosophically true, but would be very ill received. We have all our playthings; happy are they that can be contented with those they can obtain: those hours are spent in the wisest manner, that can easiest shade the ills of life, and are the least productive of ill consequences. I think my time better employed in reading the adventures of imaginary people, than the Duchess of Mariborough, who passed the latter years of her life in paddling with her will, and contriving schemes of plaguing some, and extracting praise from others, to no purpose; eternally disappointed and eternally fretting. The active scenes are over at my age. I indulge, with all the art I can, my taste for reading. If I would confine it to vatuable books, they are almost as rare as valuable men. I must be confent with what I can find. As I approach a second childhood, I endeavor to enter into the pleasures of it.

We pass briefly over many pages upon which it would be pleasant to linger. A few of Lord Chester field's letters to his son show that finical and worldly philsopher not indeel at his worst, but in an aspect sufficiently repulsive-the only really polished and accomplished writer who ever made gentility vulgar and elegance contemptible. Three letters from John Wesley expose the hard side of an apostle. A brief note from Lord Chatham to his wife, in the hour of the repeal of the Stamp Act, is a strange mixture of rhetorical triumph and natural Chesterfield is followed by his angry and ignoble correspondence with Mr. Piozzi. Boswell dances a grotesque caper of delight, at finding himself travel- sections of the book. If the work ling in the company of his idol, and hastens to im- more imperfect in the later than in the part to David Garcick a sense of his honor and happmess: "Dear, sir, here I am, and Mr. Eamuel able in part, no doubt, to Johnson actually with me!" "Think what an enthusiastic hanginess I shall have to see Mr. Samuel Johnson walking among the romantic rocks and | touched our sympathies with surest hand, most of in his povercy, resigns a petty legacy to his poorer relations. Gray chats with his friends in a strain | traced the following lines to William B. Reed, of Philwhich for all its case and lightness is as polished as that of his verse. Samuel Richardson addresses Aaron Hill in the most comeally apologetic criticism that ever a prosperous bookseller passed upon | Park, a colleguy with pleasant friends of an evena poor post; "As to your particular title to this | ing. If it is death to part with these delights (and great work, I have your pardon to beg if I refer to your consideration whether epic, truly epic, as the piece is, you would choose to call it epic in the titlepage; since hundreds who will see the title, will not, at the time, have seen your admirable definition of the word. Excuse, sir, this freedom also, and excuse these excuses." We can almost see the ' immortal little kind, honest man with the round panneh," and " a holo of virtue round his nightcap," as he appears to us in the pages of "The Virginians.

But it is time to pass on to another of the great inmes in the roll of letter-writers. Close upon the death of Pope, while Lady Mary was solucing second childhood with novels, Horace Walpole followed with his celebrated letters to Sir Horace Mann. He is the model for all chroniclers of gossip, the historians of society who spend their lives in dressing falsehood and folly in the disguise of polite letters. and propagating scandal with the aid of epigrams. No correspondence of the period is more generally entertaining, and no tattler is less embarrassed by the truth. Macaulay passed indement upon the nan in a simile so apt that Walpole himself might have been glad to be the author of it. His writings 'rank as high among the delicacies of intellectual epicores as the Strasburg pies among the dishes described in the Almanach des Gourmands. But as the paté-de-foie-gras owes its excellence to the diseases of the wretched animal which furnishes it and would be good for nothing if it were not made of livers preternaturally swollen, so none but an unhealthy and disorganized mind could have produced such literary luxuries as the works of Walnote." Nothing seriously occupied his mind-in literature, in art, in politics, in fashionable society— unless it was little. "While he was fetching and carrying the gossip of Kensington Palace and Carlton House, he fancied that he was engaged in polities, and when he recorded that gossip he fancied that he was writing history." If we turn back a century, from Walpole to Waller, for example, or to Clarendon, we shall be impressed not more by the vast improvement in piquancy, grace, and fluency of epistolary style than by the decay of conscience. Even from Pope to Walpole there is an enormous fall; for where the poet of Twickenham was artificial and insincere, the accomplished trifler of Strawberry Hill was petty to the point of baseness. Yet Walpole emagined tout he was great enough to look down upon Pope. He wrote to Sir Horace

Mann:

Your friend Mr. Doddington, it seems, is so reduced as to be relapsing into virtue. In my last 1 told you some currons ancedotes of another part of the band, of Pope and Bolingbroke. The friends of the former have published twenty pamphlets against the latter; I say against the latter, for, as there is no defending Pope, they are reduced to satirize Bolingbroke. One or thesa tells him how fittle he would be known himself from his own writings, if he were not immortalized in Pope's; and still more justly, that if he destroys Pope's moral character, what will become of his own, which has been retrieved and sanetthed by the embalming art of his friend? However, there are still new discoveries made every day of Pope's dirty selfishness. Not content with the great profits which he proposed to make of the work in question, he could not bear that the interest of his money should be lost till Bolingbroke's death; and therefore told him that it would cost very near as much to have the presset for half a dozen copies as it would for a complete edition, and by this means much for a complete edition, and by this means much form a construction.

des ring my friendship with the best grace in the world, lamenting that she could not effect ain me in my own language. When I took my leave two maids brought in a fine silver basket of embroidered handkerchiefs; she begged I would wear the richest for her sake, and gave the others to my woman and interpretress. I retired through the same ceremonies as before, and could not help tinking that I had been some time in Mahornet's paradise, so much was I charmed with what I had seen. I know not how the relation of it appears to you. I wish it may give you part of my pleasure; for I would have my dear sister share in all the diversions of, Yours, etc.

Lady Mary kept her vivacity and her somewhat masculine disposition to an advanced age. She was sixty-seven years old when she wrote thus to her daughter; don't call names; you are always abusing my pleasures, which is what no mortal will bear. Trash, lumber, sad stuit, are the titles you give to my favorite amusement. If the world a gold key. eastle standing upon his train, to avoid the chill of

Cowper's letters are much less read than they de-

style; and, as in the case of Gray, they often display a brisk humor which we are not apt to associate with the author's name. Among the specimens in Mr. Scoones's collection there is a delightful description of a visit from Mr. Greuville, eany assing for votes, when the candidate was refused admission at the front door and forced to enter by the back way because the poet's pet hare was out of her box. Something entertaining might have been chosen from the correspondence of Madame D'Arblay, but the only letter admitted is neither interesting nor characteristic. Of the compositions of Mrs. Elizabeth Montagu, flost of the blue-stockings, we can only say that they are deplorable. As we reach our own century the abundance of good letters becomes overpowering. William Godwin, Samuel Rogers, Robert Burns, Wordsworth, Scott, Coleridge, Southey, Byron, Shelley, Landor, Keats, Hood, Sydney Smith, Charles Lamb, Theodore Hook, Leigh Hunt; of men distinguished in other waiks than those of literature, Nelson, Wellington and Palmerston (though the force and clearness of Wellington's military letters would entitle them to effection. Dr. Johnson's noble letter to the Earl of | the rank of literature); and, of those who have but just ceased to write, Macaulay. Thackeray and Dickens-these are the principal names in the last earlier portions, the defects are attributvast surplus of material. If we were asked which of all the writers commemorated in the volume us would answer Thackeray. What a precious book would be a volume of letters from the pen that deiphia: "You see the pleasures the undersigned proposes to humself here in future years-a sight of the Alps, a holiday on the Rhine, a ride in the pleasures they are and no mistake), sure the mind can conceive others afterward; and I know one small philosopher who is quite ready to give up these pleasures; quite content (after a pang or two of separation from dear friends here) to put his hand into that of the summoning angel and say, 'Lead on, messenger of God our Father, to the next place whither the Divine Goodness calls us. We must be blindfetded before we can pass, I know; but I have no fear about what is to come, any more than my children need fear that the love of their father should fail them." " By Jove, how kind you all were to me! How I like people, and want to see 'em again!" But Thackeray objected to the publication of his correspondence, and only a few stray letters have seen the light. With Dickens the case is far otherwise. So many hundreds of his epistles have been printed by his family, by Forster, by James T. Fields, by Mary Cowden Clarke, and the quality of these productions is so striking that the meagreness of Mr. Scoones's selection is not easily accounted for. Dickens was one of the great letter-writers of the age. He was one of the most remarkable masters of epistolary composition in the whole range of Euglish literature. His reputation in this regard has been injured by the two volumes recently published, in which we see so much in his character that is hard, so much that is coarse, so much that is narrow and petty, an egregions selfishness, an insatiable vanity, a mind that could belittle and wholly surrender itself to the ambition of theatrical display. But in the future, when the correspondence shall have been purged of its dress, Dickens will be recognized by his best letters as at least the equal, and in many ways the superior, the line. There are few better specimens of vivid and entertaing description in the language than are to be found in some of his letters from Italy, Switzerland and France, and with the pictures of scenery and lively stories of adventure there are sketches of character worthy to be remembered with similar things in the novels. The "brave courier" on the road from Genoa to Paris, and Beaucourt, the owner of the villa in which the novelist passed two or three summers near Bonlogne, are personages almost as real and almost as dear to us as Sam Weller and Tracy Tupman. In the humorous parrative form we can think of few pieces more charming than the account Dickens once sent to a lady of a rainy day's frolic on the Thames with his son Charley and three other boys. Mr. Scoones gives none of Dickens's best letters, none which even indicate the nature of his best work in this department. Of the four short specimens which be inserts the most interesting is a piece of wild absurdity penned at the time of Queen Victoria's marriage in 1840. Dickens amused himself by feigning to be madly in love with the Queen. vein written to Walter Savage Landor, and to Fors-

tain. Mr. Scoones has done an important pioneer work; hereafter some one with riper judgment and 1,288 Broadway.

more catholic taste will borrow his idea and carry) to more complete results,

MEDICAL AND SURGICAL NOTES.

MORTALITY IN ITS RELATION TO WEALTH AND POVERTY.—One of the statistic collectors of England has gathered information concerning some forty-eight thousand children of the well-to-do classes in England and Wales, including members of the legal, cirrical and medical professions, as also of the nobility and gentry, It is found, on inquiry, that in the first year of life, only 80.45 per 1.000 deaths occurred among the infant so.45 per 1.000 deaths occurred among the infant of the easy classes in that country, as agains 149.45 among the children of the general population but among the latter class, the percentace went up to 240 in cities like Manchester and Liverpool, and as high as 300 in the poorer quarters of English cities, while it Berlin it is actually 500. From one to flev versulf age 46.84 children of the unore class die of one thousand born, and as many as 113.69 in the general population. During the remainder of early youth, from five by twenty, the difficuous is not intarked; but 65.47 per on thousand deaths occur among the richer classes, a thousand deaths occur among the riener against 74.04. In the general public.

ANALYSIS OF YELLOW FEVER ATMOSPHERA serve to be. They are distinguished by the same -Analyses of the air at New Orleans, from September simplicity and truthfulness which mark his poetical 9 to November 24, last year, during the prevalence. vellow fever, revealed a series of extraordinary variations in the amount of free and albumin id ammoniate the million of cubic feet of atmosphere, and these cor responded very curiously with the progress and fluetaresponded very curiously with the progress and flucta-tions of the epidemic. Thus, on September 2, the analy-sis showed 125.62 grains of free and 350.53 grains of albuminoid ammonia to each 1,000,000 cubic feet of air. Fen days after, the amount of a animoid stood at the extraordinary figure of 400.75 grains; this was its highest point, and, with many fluctuations from day to day, it gradually declined as the epidemic work out its fury, until on November 24 the abount was only 47.25 grains. The curve of the free animals, was less regular, but the decline has a general correspondence with that of albuminoid.

FARADAY'S THEORY OF LIFE. - The late Professor Faraday, it is stated, adopted the theory that the natural age of man is one hundred years. The duration of life he believed to be measured by the time of growth, Thus in the camel, the union takes place at cight years, in the horse at five, in the ilon at four, in the deg at two in the rabbit at one. The natural termination is five in the rabbit at one. The natural termination is removes from these several points. Now, man twenty years in growing, lives five times twenty—that is, one hundred; the camel is eight ye growing, and area forty years; and so with animals. Professor F. divides life into equal as growth and decime—and those fats to induce, a virilty and age; infancy extending to the two year, youth to the fiftheth—because it is in this reading which the organism remains complete,—seventy-five old age commences. seventy-five old age commences

SALTS IN FOOD .- Experiments recently made with the morganic constituents of food show that, as though the saits are to a great extent retained and used over, a certain amount of the same is exercical, Consequently, when saits are withheld from the food, the whole body, but especially those persons by changing -like blood and muscle-become stradually power in sains and richer in abunent but, though the total quantity in the body is lessened, the mixture of salis in the tissues and juices is unchanged. The diminution of salis in the muscles cames muscular exhaustic —and, in the nerves, trie excitability, and then puralysis of the herve centres. It also appears from those experiments, that the quantity of sair early securary in tood is less than has usually been supposed.

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